

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF CHESHAM

REPORT
of the
MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH
for the year 1954

T. P. EVANS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.,
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CHESHAM

R E P O R T

of the

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YEAR 1954

. . . T.P.EVANS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health



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Public Health Department,
Council Offices,
Chesham, Bucks.

June, 1955.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Chesham Urban District Council.

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary circumstances of the Council's district for the year 1954.

During the year the health of the community was good. The usual standards for judging the well-being of a community are the prevalence and death rates from certain conditions, such as the infant mortality rate, the maternal mortality rate, the rate of notification of new cases of tuberculosis and the tuberculosis death rate. All these were low in 1954. So also were the number of notifications of all the commoner acute infectious diseases. There was no epidemic of any kind. Nor was there a case of diphtheria notified during the year, thus making 1954 the tenth successive year during which no case of diphtheria was notified within the Council's district. These satisfactory indices of public health, in so far as they indicate a decline in the conditions associated with overcrowding are in that measure due to the Council's steady pursuit of its new housing construction policy.

There is evidence to support the view that the year 1954 marked the end of the aftermath phase of the recent war. The changing patterns of future trends also became evident. For instance, when meat was decontrolled on the 2nd July, 1954, the provision of adequate local slaughtering facilities became a matter for the local Council. This, however, is temporary and dependent upon the future implementation of the national policy of moderate concentration of slaughtering facilities. Another instance is that the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, attempts a solution of an aspect of the housing problem that is different from that successfully accomplished by new housing construction. It authorized and encourages, by monetary grants, the modernization of the older houses, so many of which are over 65 years old. As most Housing Authorities already have, or soon will have, reached the peak period of new housing construction, it is to be expected that greater use of improvement grants for conversions and modernization will be made in the future. And finally under the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, slum clearance, which has been in abeyance since the late thirties, has been revived. The Council is under an obligation to submit in outline within twelve months of the 30th August, 1954, its programme of slum clearance for the next five year period. When prominence is given to slum clearance as at present, it may be safely assumed that the overcrowding index is so low as to indicate that the need for new-house building has been satisfied sufficiently. Finally, if conclusive proof of changing patterns were required, reference should be made to the field trials on an unprecedented scale of the SALK vaccine against poliomyelitis undertaken in the U.S.A. in the early months of 1954.

The Registrar General's County Report No. 16 is the 1951 Census Report relating to Buckinghamshire. It contains not only interesting information about the County as a whole, but also useful statistical information about Local Government areas within the County. One impressive fact about the County is that its increase in population of 42 per cent in the last two decades (1931 - 1951) is exceeded by two other counties only in England and Wales. Such local matters as the increase of local population and its distribution and concentration in the fringe areas of Greater London are matters of interest to this Council.

In conclusion I would like to express my appreciation of the willing co-operation that the clerical and inspectorial staffs of the Public Health Department of the Council have given me in all aspects of the Department's work during the year.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

T.P.EVANS.

Medical Officer of Health.

S T A F F

Medical Officer of Health

T.P.Evans, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Chief Sanitary Inspector

L.D.Saturley, Cert. S.I.B., M.S.I.A., A.I.Hsg.

Additional Sanitary Inspector

A.P.Wells, Cert. S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

Assistant Rodent Officer

J.G. Dobson (Resigned 31.1.54)
T. Rees (Appointed 1.3.54)

Clerk

J.C. How

Shorthand Typist

Miss M. Rathmell (Appointed 5.5.54)

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SECTION A

GENERAL AND VITAL STATISTICS

1. GENERAL STATISTICS

Population, Census 1951	11,433
Population (estimated mid year 1954)	11,550
Area (acres of District)	3,489
Number of inhabited dwellings (per Valuation List 31.3.55)	4,000
Rateable Value of Area (31.3.55)	£86,324
Product of Penny Rate 1954/55 (probable)	£336

The Urban District of Chesham was extended by the Bucks Review Order of 1934 from an acreage of 1,357 to the present acreage of 3,489. The rateable value on 1st April, 1920, was £46,915: on the 1st April, 1934, it was £56,528; whilst on 31st December 1953 it was £82,270.

The population of Chesham in 1921 was 8,534; in 1931 - 8,809; and the Registrar-General's estimate for 1954 was 11,550.

The product of a penny rate has increased from £216 for the financial year 1934/35 to £336 for the financial year 1954/55.

2. VITAL STATISTICS

Births

(a) Notified Live Births	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	91	80	171
Illegitimate	5	-	5
(b) Notified Still Births			
Legitimate	2	2	4
Illegitimate	-	-	-
	<u>Chesham</u>	<u>England & Wales</u>	
Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population	15.2	15.2 +	
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	22.2	24.0 +	

Infant and Maternal Mortality

(a) Deaths from puerperal causes			Nil
(b) Deaths of Infants under one year of age	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	2	-	2
Illegitimate	-	-	-
(c) Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	1	-	1
Illegitimate	-	-	-

Death Rates of Infants under 1 year of age:-

Legitimate per 1,000 legitimate live births	11.7
All infants per 1,000 registered live births	11.4
All infants per 1,000 live births (England & Wales)	25.5 +

Deaths

Crude Death Rate per 1,000 population	10.3
Death Rate, England and Wales	11.3 +
Corrected Death Rate per 1,000 population	8.9

+ Provisional only.

Note

The corrected Death Rate is obtained when the crude rate has been adjusted to make allowance for the way in which the sex and age distribution of the local population differs from that for England and Wales as a whole. The adjustment is made by multiplying the crude rate by the area comparability factor, the appropriate factor for the district being .87. The corrected rate is comparable with the crude rate for England and Wales, and the corresponding adjusted rate for any other area.

Causes of Death

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory	1		1
2. Acute Poliomyelitis		1	1
3. Other infective and parasitic diseases	1		1
4. Malignant neoplasms	10	13	23
5. Vascular lesions of nervous system	10	6	16
6. Coronary disease, angina	12	11	23
7. Other heart disease	5	4	9
8. Other circulatory disease	3	1	4
9. Influenza	1		1
10. Pneumonia	5	7	12
11. Bronchitis	2	2	4
12. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	4	2	6
13. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	1		1
14. Nephritis and nephrosis		1	1
15. Hyperplasia of prostate	1		1
16. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	7	5	12
17. Motor vehicle accidents	1	1	2
18. All other accidents	1		1
	65	54	119

Deaths of Chesham residents during 1954, arranged in age groups

<u>Age</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Under four weeks	1	-	1
1 month to 1 year	1	-	1
1 - 4 yrs.	-	-	-
5 - 9 yrs.	-	-	-
10 - 14 yrs.	-	-	-
15 - 24 yrs.	-	2	2
25 - 34 yrs.	-	-	-
35 - 44 yrs.	2	1	3
45 - 54 yrs.	4	3	7
55 - 64 yrs.	18	6	24
65 - 74 yrs.	16	9	25
75 plus	23	33	56
TOTAL ALL AGES	65	54	119

POPULATIONS, BIRTH AND MORTALITY RATES FOR THE YEAR 1954

District	Population Census 1951	Registrar-Gen. estimated Population Mid-1954	Crude Birth Rate per 1,000 Population	Crude Death Rate per 1,000 Population	Tuberculosis Death Rate per 1,000 Population.	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 Births	Neo-Natal Mortality Rate per 1,000 Births	Maternal Mortality per 1,000 live and still-births
URBAN								
Aylesbury	21,054	21,200	16.7 (355)	9.6 (203)	0.14 (3)	16.9 (6)	16.9 (6)	-
Beaconsfield	7,909	8,290	15.4 (128)	9.3 (77)	-	23.4 (3)	15.6 (2)	-
Bletchley	10,916	12,290	16.9 (208)	7.6 (94)	-	9.6 (2)	9.6 (2)	-
Buckingham	3,944	4,090	17.8 (73)	12.5 (51)	-	27.4 (2)	27.4 (2)	-
CHESHAM	11,428	11,550	15.2 (176)	10.2 (112)	0.09 (1)	11.4 (2)	5.7 (1)	-
Eton	3,250	4,780	10.3 (49)	6.3 (30)	-	20.4 (1)	20.4 (1)	-
High Wycombe	40,692	42,230	16.0 (675)	8.6 (364)	0.14 (6)	17.8 (12)	16.3 (11)	-
Linslade	3,269	3,400	18.5 (63)	7.9 (27)	0.29 (1)	15.9 (1)	15.9 (1)	-
Marlow	6,480	6,640	15.7 (104)	11.3 (75)	0.15 (1)	19.2 (2)	9.6 (1)	-
Newport Pagnell	4,366	4,290	13.8 (59)	12.1 (52)	-	33.9 (2)	33.9 (2)	-
Slough	66,439	67,090	14.5 (975)	7.6 (510)	0.13 (9)	20.5 (20)	10.3 (10)	-
Wolverton	13,421	13,550	13.6 (184)	15.4 (209)	0.15 (2)	27.2 (5)	10.9 (2)	5.41 (1)
TOTAL URBAN	194,168	199,400	15.3 (3,049)	9.1 (1811)	0.12 (23)	19.0 (58)	13.4 (41)	0.32 (1)
RURAL								
Amersham	41,432	43,910	14.4 (634)	9.8 (431)	-	17.4 (11)	12.6 (8)	-
Aylesbury	29,543	31,570	15.4 (487)	11.0 (347)	0.10 (3)	30.8 (15)	18.5 (9)	2.04 (1)
Buckingham	9,422	10,180	15.6 (159)	8.9 (91)	0.10 (1)	56.6 (9)	44.0 (7)	-
Eton	43,120	45,240	16.2 (732)	9.0 (405)	0.04 (2)	27.3 (20)	19.1 (14)	-
Newport Pagnell	13,817	14,120	16.6 (234)	13.8 (195)	0.07 (1)	17.1 (4)	42.7 (1)	-
Wing	9,042	8,830	18.1 (160)	8.0 (71)	-	6.2 (1)	6.2 (1)	-
Winslow	7,268	7,640	16.8 (129)	13.9 (106)	0.13 (1)	31.0 (4)	23.3 (3)	-
Wycombe	39,352	42,110	16.6 (701)	9.0 (379)	0.09 (4)	27.1 (19)	21.4 (15)	1.41 (1)
TOTAL RURAL	192,996	203,600	15.9 (3236)	9.9 (2025)	0.06 (12)	25.6 (83)	17.9 (58)	0.61 (2)
TOTAL COUNTY	386,164	403,000	15.6 (6285)	9.5 (3836)	0.09 (35)	22.4 (141)	15.8 (99)	0.47 (3)

NOTES: - 1. In view of the small numbers on which some of the rates quoted are based, the actual numbers are given in parenthesis for the purpose of clearer comparison.

2. The maternal death in Aylesbury Rural District relates to a death where the interval between the maternal condition and date of death was stated to exceed twelve months.

SECTION B

THE 1951 CENSUS

The Census Report for Buckinghamshire was published in 1954 and some of the statistics relating to Chesham are of such wide interest that they are felt to be worthy of inclusion in this Report.

General Note:

- (a) The 1951 Census statistics are in respect of the living population enumerated as at midnight 8/9th April, 1951.
- (b) Comparative figures in respect of earlier censuses have been adjusted (unless otherwise stated) to relate to local areas as constituted at the date of the 1951 Census.

1. POPULATION AND INTERCENSAL CHANGES

The total population enumerated in Buckinghamshire at the 1951 Census was 386,291, indicating a net increase over the whole period since the 1931 Census of about 115,000 persons. This increase of 42.3 per cent represents a considerable acceleration of the rate of increase as compared with that observed in the preceding intercensal period (15 per cent) even when the longer time interval is taken into account.

The percentage increase in the population of Buckinghamshire in the two decades is greater than that in any other county of England and Wales, with the exception of Hertfordshire and Sussex West. Only 42.7 per cent of the enumerated population of Buckinghamshire were born in the County.

The Census gives the following population statistics and intercensal variation for the Chesham Urban District:-

Population 1921	9,739		
Population 1931	10,230		
Population 1951	11,433		
Percentage increase 1921 - 1931	5 per cent		
Population increase 1931 - 1951	1,203		
Percentage increase: By births and deaths	7.2 per cent		
Balance	4.6	"	"
Total	11.8	"	"

The figures relate to the area as constituted in 1951. The Census indicates that the net increase in population resulting from the boundary changes of 1934 was 1,418.

The percentage increase of population in Chesham during the period 1931 - 1951 is small when compared with that for the County as a whole and the Tables show that only 5 out of the 20 administrative areas of the County have had smaller increases. The increase there has been in the local population has been due mainly to the number of births exceeding deaths, migration movements having played a small part.

2. DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX

(a) Distribution by Age

<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>CHESHAM</u>	<u>Buckinghamshire</u>	<u>England & Wales</u>
Years	-	Percentage	-
0 - 14	20.4	21.7	22.2
15 - 64	66.5	67.3	66.9
65 plus	13.1	11.0	10.9

The Report States:-

"Comparison between 1951 and 1931 illustrates the "ageing" trend that has been noted in similar reports in respect of previous intercensal periods. In Buckinghamshire 11.0 per cent of persons were aged 65 and over in 1951 compared with 8.7 per cent in 1931. Although there has been only a slight decrease in the proportion in the working age group 15 - 64 taken as a whole, there were relatively few persons in the younger section of this group and more in the older section. The changes in Buckinghamshire have been similar to those in England and Wales, even though migration has somewhat distorted the picture."

(b) Sex Ratio

Sex Ratio (females per 1,000 males)

CHESHAM	1,123
Buckinghamshire	1,050
England and Wales	1,085

3. POPULATION DENSITY

	<u>Buckinghamshire A.C.</u>	<u>CHESHAM</u>
Acreage (land & inland water)	479,411	3,489
Population - Males	188,457	5,386
Females	197,834	6,047
Total Persons	386,291	11,433
Persons per acre	0.8	3.3

4. HOUSING OF PRIVATE HOUSEHOLDS

(a) Dwellings.

	<u>Buckinghamshire A.C.</u>	<u>CHESHAM</u>
No. of structurally separate dwellings (occupied & vacant)	112,601	3,702
Percentage increase 1931 - 1951	55.7	32.5
Rooms per dwelling occupied		
1951	4.81	4.65
1931	5.28	4.98
Percentage of occupied dwellings with 1 or 2 rooms only	4.21	4.23

On the date of the Census 89 dwellings or 1.16 per cent were vacant.

(b) Households

	<u>Buckinghamshire A.C.</u>	<u>CHESHAM</u>
No. of Private Households	112,967	3,717
Percentage increase 1931 - 1951	59.2	33.0
Percentage sharing a dwelling	6.6	5.4
Percentage occupying 1 or 2 rooms only	7.6	6.8
Persons per household		
1951	3.22	3.06
1931	3.63	3.61
Percentage of 1 person households	8.8	10.3

(c) Density of occupation (persons per room)

	<u>Buckinghamshire A.C.</u>	<u>CHESHAM</u>
Persons per room	0.69	0.68
Percentage of population at density of more than 2 per room	1.6	1.2
Percentage of households at density of more than 2 persons per room	1.1	0.7

In the Census Report the term 'Household' replaces the term family used in the previous census, a private household comprising single persons living alone, or groups of persons, living together in the sense of sharing the same living room or sitting at the same table. The rooms counted are the usual living rooms, including the bedrooms and kitchens but excluding bathrooms, sculleries, landings, etc.

It is to be noted that the proportion of persons living at more than two per room has been lowered from the approximate figure of 1.99 per cent for 1931 to 1.2 per cent in 1951. This figure is the same as that for England and Wales.

Despite the improvement that has taken place there were still in Chesham at the time of the Census 202 families (5.4 per cent) sharing a dwelling and 23.7 per cent of these families were living at more than one person per room.

The proportion of households sharing dwellings in Buckinghamshire was 6.6 per cent whilst the percentage for England and Wales as a whole was 15.1 per cent.

The Report states that there were in Buckinghamshire more than twice as many households of one person in 1951 as in 1931, and those of two persons had increased in numbers by 84 per cent. There had been smaller but still large relative increases in numbers of households of three, four and five persons, but numbers containing six or more persons had decreased. Above five persons the decrease gets relatively larger as the size of household increases. The experience in Buckinghamshire in these respects is in line with the reduction in family sizes which has been taking place in the country generally.

5. SOCIAL STRUCTURE

A brief description of the nature of the social structure according to the Registrar-General's Classification of occupations is as follows:

Class I	Professional, etc. occupations
Class II	Intermediate occupations
Class III	Skilled occupations
Class IV	Partly skilled occupations
Class V	Unskilled occupations

The distribution in Chesham when compared with England and Wales or Buckinghamshire shows a higher proportion of Class III occupations (skilled) and a lower proportion of the partly skilled or unskilled occupations.

	Proportion per 1,000 occupied and retired males in Social Classes.				
	I	II	III	IV	V
England and Wales (a)	33	150	527	162	128
Buckinghamshire A.C.	47	158	529	150	116
CHESHAM	34	157	585	118	106

(a) one per cent sample data

SECTION C

HEALTH SERVICES

1. HOSPITAL SERVICES

Chesham Urban District is situated in the Oxford Regional Hospital Area. The Regional Hospital Board has delegated the duty of management of the local hospitals to the High Wycombe & District Management Committee which in turn has delegated day-to-day administration to two House Committees. One House Committee is responsible for three hospitals, viz. the Amersham General Hospital, the Chesham (Cottage) Hospital and the Stone Maternity Hospital, Chalfont St. Giles. The other is responsible for the Chalfont and Gerrards Cross Hospital, Chalfont St. Peter.

Hospitals available for the District are as follows:-

Tuberculosis	-	Berks & Bucks Joint Sanatorium, Peppard Common.
General	-	Chesham Cottage Hospital
"	-	Amersham General Hospital
"	-	Royal Bucks County Hospital, Aylesbury.
"	-	War Memorial Hospital, High Wycombe
"	-	Chalfont St. Peter Cottage Hospital.
Infectious Diseases	-	Aylesbury Isolation Hospital.

2. LABORATORY FACILITIES

The Public Health Laboratory Service is concerned with Bacteriology and Epidemiology in relation to the diagnosis, prevention and control of infectious disease.

Public Health Laboratories are situated at Walton Street, Oxford, and at Luton & Dunstable Hospital, Lewsey Road, Luton, and in general undertake free of charge the bacteriological examination of such specimens as sputum, nose and throat swabs, faeces, urine, blood, etc. The bacteriological examination of samples of water, milk and ice-cream is carried out at the Public Health Laboratory, Luton.

The chemical examination of water is undertaken by the Public Analyst Southwark Borough Council.

3. AMBULANCE SERVICES

Since the operation of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the County Council is responsible for the provision of ambulance facilities of all kinds. The Bucks County Council provides an ambulance service for non-infectious cases for the whole of the County through the agency of the Order of St. John and the British Red Cross Society. Two St. John's ambulances are stationed in Chesham.

Ambulances for the removal of infectious cases are stationed at Aylesbury and Slough.

4. NURSING IN THE HOME

This Service is now provided by Miss M.E. Marston, S.R.N., S.C.M., Q.N. and Miss G.M. Wildish, S.R.N., S.C.M., Q.N., from 305 Berkhamstead Road, Chesham. The nursing sisters hold an ante-natal clinic at this address.

5. CLINICS

There has been no major change in the dual services provided at the Germain Street Clinic, viz. a Minor Ailments Clinic and a Specialised Service Clinic.

The Venereal Diseases Scheme of the Bucks County Council has established clinics at King Edward VII Hospital, Windsor, and at High Wycombe.

6. BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

There is no doubt that this service is one of the most vital to the well being of any modern community, but it is also one of the most unobtrusive and least heralded of the voluntary services in the country. I have to thank the Regional Transfusion Centre, Oxford; also Miss Boston, Commandant B.R.C.S., Great Missenden and District Branch No. 30, and Mrs. W. Stevens, Divisional Director, B.R.C.S., Amersham Division for the following information relating to the service locally.

<u>Place</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Organiser</u>	<u>No. of Donors</u>
Amersham	Red Cross H.Q. Chiltern Avenue	Mrs. Stevens LycheCot, Woodside Close,	113
Chesham	School Clinic, Germain Street	Amersham. Tel. A.981	101
Great Missenden	Memorial Hall, Great Missenden	Miss Boston, Lansdown, Great Missenden Tel. G.M.2235	58

There is an urgent need for more donors in all three areas. Volunteers for this important service are recommended to communicate direct with the organiser for their area as shown above.

Blood Transfusion Sessions are held at six monthly intervals in January and July, with only a week or two between the times of the visits in Chesham and Amersham.

SECTION D

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACTS, 1948 to 1951

These Acts have been described as the final step in the break-up of the old Poor Law, the repeal of which was widely welcomed as it had, in the main, outlived its usefulness. The duties imposed by the Poor Law were transferred in many instances to Local Authorities, and certain duties, namely those under Sections 47 and 50 of the above Acts become the responsibilities of District Councils.

Section 47

The provisions of this Section have for their purpose the securing of the necessary care and attention for persons who

- (a) are suffering from grave chronic disease or, being aged, infirm or physically incapacitated, are living in insanitary conditions and
- (b) are unable to devote to themselves, and are not receiving from other persons, proper care and attention.

Upon receipt of a report from the Medical Officer of Health, the Local Authority may apply to a Magistrates' Court for an order authorising a person's removal to hospital or other suitable place and for his detention for a period not exceeding three months. The person in respect of whom the application is made or some person in charge of him must be given seven clear days' notice of the intended application and of the time and place at which it is proposed to be made.

Section 47 of the 1948 Act has been amended by the National Assistance (Amendment) Act of 1951 which contains additional provisions for securing the speedier removal of urgent cases. Under these provisions, the Local Authority may give their Medical Officer of Health general authority to take immediate action where urgent removal is considered necessary; possessing such authority he may apply to a magistrate for an order to detain a person in suitable premises for a period not exceeding three weeks. In these circumstances, the order may be made without notice of intended application having been given.

No cases requiring action under these provisions were brought to the notice of the Public Health Department during the year.

Section 50

Under this Section of the above Acts, the duty is placed upon the Councils of County Boroughs and County Districts to arrange for the burial or cremation of any person who has died or been found dead in their area. This duty is exercisable only when it appears to the Council that no other suitable arrangements have been or are being made.

During the year no occasion for the exercise of this duty has arisen.

SECTION E

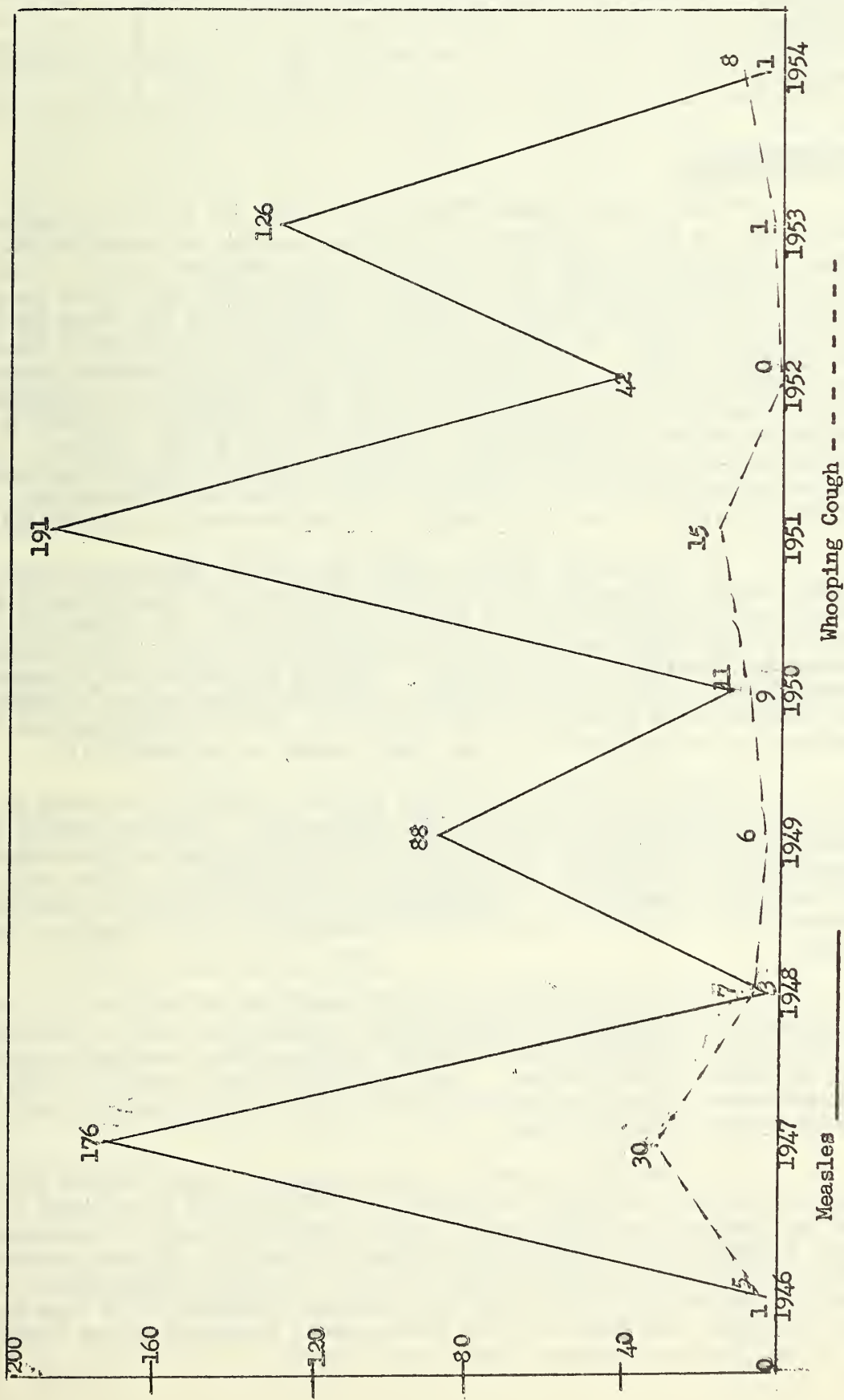
PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

There were 14 cases of Infectious Disease notified as follows:-

Disease	Cases Notified	Hospital	Deaths
Scarlet Fever	3	1	1
Measles	11	1	1
Whooping Cough	8	1	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	2	1	1

There were also seven primary notifications of tuberculosis.

Notifications of Measles and Whooping Cough - 1946 - 1954



TUBERCULOSIS

The following table shows the new cases of tuberculosis and the deaths from the disease, arranged in age groups.

Age Periods Years	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1 - 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 15	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 25	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 - 35	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 - 45	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
45 - 55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55 - 65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
65 - 75	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Over 75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	5	1	-	1	-	-	-	-

2. POLIOMYELITIS

Having in my Annual Reports for 1952 and 1953 anticipated and reported that "a live attenuated and harmless vaccine for immunization (against poliomyelitis) will be available in the next few years", recent events in the U.S.A. compel me to return to the subject again this year. In the U.S.A. a vaccine for this purpose, discovered by Dr. Jonas Salk of Pittsburgh University, was given a field trial on an unprecedented scale in the spring of 1954. The results of such trials were assessed under the expert guidance of Dr. Thomas Francis Jr. of the University of Michigan, and were released by the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis to coincide with the tenth anniversary, in April 1955, of the death of President Roosevelt, and have been acclaimed as an outstanding achievement. Indeed seldom has an item of scientific news aroused such intense and universal interest as the announcement of these successful field trials.

In the trials 440,000 school children in forty-four states were vaccinated; about half as many were injected with uninfected fluid, and a further 1,830,000 served as additional controls. Dr. Francis is reported to have said that the vaccine had proved to be 80 - 90% effective in preventing paralytic poliomyelitis. This is unquestionably a tremendous achievement and will, no doubt, become a landmark in preventive medicine. But at the same time it would be unfortunate if, in the first burst of enthusiasm, it was thought to be the final answer to poliomyelitis.

Several batches of vaccine had to be used in the study and in some areas several lots were used in combination. But the potency of different batches of vaccine, when injected, to stimulate the production of resistance in the body to poliomyelitis differed widely. Lots were graded as "good", "moderate", "low moderate" or "poor" in such potency by a combination of laboratory control and a knowledge of the infecting strain of virus.

Special attention was paid to reactions to vaccination, and no localization of paralysis to the limb of inoculation, (as is sometimes found with other injections) was found in children who developed paralysis within one month of vaccination. The preliminary report seems to have established clearly that the vaccine prepared by Dr. Salk was safe and protected against poliomyelitis.

At this stage interest in this country become intense and so urgent that on the 25th April the Minister of Health made a statement in the House of Commons congratulating Dr. Salk on what is clearly a momentous and historic advance in the protection of human well-being. He also announced that we in this country will go ahead with the increased production of vaccine; that two important firms were already arranging to do this as fast as possible, and that it is the Government's intention to ask these firms to sell to the Government their whole output.

Adding that it was perhaps as well to put the facts in plain words, he said that the new vaccine involved inoculating our children at repeated intervals with a preparation derived from the kidneys of dead monkeys; that we must make sure that it is effective against the particular strain of virus most commonly found in this country; that it is not sure yet that it is fully effective in the case of children about four or under where our incidence of the disease is highest; and that it may be less than normally effective against TYPE I of the virus - the commonest type in this country. These reservations keep the picture in true perspective. But they do not detract from the intense humanitarian value of this great discovery or affect the determination that the people of this country shall benefit from it to the fullest possible extent.

Later, on the 2nd May the Minister was asked to make a further statement about poliomyelitis vaccine in view of the decision taken in the U.S.A. to suspend all injections of SALK vaccine made by the Cutter Laboratories (U.S.A.) and also what information the Minister had received in respect of deleterious effects arising from the use of the recently discovered vaccine. The reply was to the effect that all vaccine proposed to be used in a small field trial in this country will first have to be the subject of rigorous tests by the Medical Research Council; that plans for large-scale immunization are dependent on the Minister of Health being satisfied as far as is humanly possible as a result of those tests and trials, and that the vaccine to be used is both efficient and free from danger.

It was announced in Washington on Friday, 6th May 1955, that supplies of the newly manufactured Salk anti-polio vaccine had been "held up"; that safety measures are being considered under which every batch and not just sample lots will be tested. The U.S. Public Health Service, it is reported, has confirmed that 44 children have developed poliomyelitis but that 4,000,000 to 6,000,000 people have had "shots". The National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis has announced that most of the first and second-grade school children (aged 6 - 7 years) in the country (U.S.A.) will have been vaccinated before the summer vacation this year.

The unusual ~~insertion~~ of dates in a report of this nature indicates the urgency and intensity of world-wide interest in this matter. In conclusion it may be said that from the preliminary reports of the 1954 U.S.A. trials, it appears that the vaccine used was safe, and there is no cause to alter that opinion, but it is by no means clear that the same safety tests apply to-day. Unquestionably the most important requirement in a vaccine is its safety and the tests to ensure this must be strict indeed.

Finally, it may be said that findings in Canada and Finland support the U.S.A. results that the vaccine is 80 to 90 per cent effective in preventing paralytic poliomyelitis in immunized children. Is it too much to hope that immunization of the entire susceptible population may help to eliminate paralytic poliomyelitis in the same manner that small-pox has been controlled by mass vaccination.

3. DIPHTHERIA AND WHOOPING COUGH

Age Groups	Diphtheria Immunization							Total
	Under 1	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	
Primary Immunization	68	60	10	4	-	8	2	152
Re-Immunization	-	-	-	-	13	46	7	66

The year 1954 was the tenth successive year during which no case of Diphtheria was notified within the Council's district. The number of cases in the country as a whole fell to the new low record number of 182.

Thus it may be inferred that Diphtheria is a dying disease. Indeed there may be some justification for the view that we are devoting too much time to a disease which kills no more persons than do thunderbolts. The answer to this criticism is however obvious; if we cease immunizing children against diphtheria, the disease will return in its former severity, and the number of cases as well as the death rate will mount rapidly. This danger is by no means theoretical. The average young mother has now never seen a case of diphtheria, nor does she know of any friend in the neighbourhood whose child has suffered from such an attack. It is natural therefore that she should be increasingly apathetic in the matter of obtaining protection for her child.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, Whooping Cough is sufficiently prevalent to make parents anxious to avoid it as far as it is humanly possible, and the dramatic success of Diphtheria immunization has led to an urgent demand for preventive immunization against other infectious diseases, including Whooping Cough. And here it is only fair to say that to-day Whooping Cough is one of the major infectious diseases as well as being one of the most distressing hazards of infant life. Hence it is not surprising that authorised research field trials are taking place to determine the efficacy of several immunizing agents against Whooping Cough. It is therefore common practice now-a-days to protect a child against Diphtheria and Whooping Cough at the same time by three single injections of balanced doses of combined preventives.

Each disease presents its own problem. In regard to Diphtheria it is public apathy now there are so few cases. If the number of cases is to be kept down, at least 75 percent of children under one year of age must be immunized, yet during 1954 the proportion in Chesham was 44 percent only, whilst the national proportion was 35.75 percent. With regard to Whooping Cough, the problem is how to encourage immunization early enough in infancy; for the most critical period is the first six months of life, and the disease is more deadly in the first six months than in the second. The present recommendations are that vaccination against small-pox as well as preventive inoculations against both Diphtheria and Whooping Cough should be completed within the first six months of life.

Immunization is now practiced against at least fourteen infectious diseases, and there is hope of protection against more of the virus diseases. Small-pox vaccination of infants is well established; immunization against Tuberculosis with B.C.G. is now being practised, whilst travellers abroad are well acquainted with yellow fever vaccination. The early administration of balanced doses of combined preventive against Diphtheria and Whooping Cough has much to recommend it.

SECTION F

HOUSING

1. THE HOUSING REPAIRS AND RENTS ACT, 1954

The Housing Repairs and Rents Act became law on 30th August 1954. Its main purpose may be conveniently described in two parts. The first part relates to the conditions attaching to grants for works of improvement or conversions necessary to extend the habitability of older decaying houses for a further limited period. The second is slum clearance. With regard to the former, attention is directed to the nation's stock of existing houses, more than four million of which are over 65 years old. As time passes an increasing number of these older houses fall into decay each year. And here it is fair to say that the Act was designed primarily not in the interest of owners or of tenants, but in the interest of the houses themselves which represent an important national asset. The second part sets in motion once again the machinery of slum clearance by local authorities. It applies to those areas within their districts where houses have deteriorated to such a degree of decay that they appear to the local Council to be unfit for human habitation and liable to demolition.

To encourage the preservation and retention of decaying houses, provisions for Improvement Grants are continued. The grants themselves are not obligatory but permissive and are solely within the discretion of the Council. It may be of interest to recall that in origin they may be traced as far back as the Housing (Rural Workers) Acts, 1926 - 1942. In view of the controversy to which they have given rise, it may be worth noting that in the early days of the 1926 Act, some Rural District Councils were reluctant to implement its provisions, but that the Rural District Councils as a whole asked for its provisions to be renewed when the Act expired in 1948. Instead, however, the 1949 Housing Act went further. Not only did it renew the provisions concerning Improvement Grants, but it extended their use to all authorities.

In many important respects the 1949 Housing Act was amended by the recent Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954. The new Act simplifies administrative procedure; it removes altogether the upper limit of estimated cost of works, previously £800; it reduced from 30 to 15 years the period for which a dwelling must, after conversion or improvement, be expected to provide satisfactory accommodation, in order to qualify for grant. And finally, it amends the provisions for the fixing of rents so as to enable the Council to settle a figure which represents the value of the dwelling under conditions of the day, and so does justice to both the owner and the tenant.

In conclusion, whilst on the face of it the Act clearly encourages modernization of privately owned structurally sound existing houses, the alternative is clearly implied whereby through continued neglect these decaying houses, unless provided with modern amenities, will rapidly deteriorate into slums and put heavier burdens on public funds.

2. PROPOSALS FOR DEALING WITH SLUM CLEARANCE (CIRCULAR NO. 55/54)

The new act requires the Council to submit for the Minister's approval by August, 1955, proposals for dealing in one way or another with the houses in their area which appear to them to be unfit for human habitation and liable to demolition. The Minister does not expect more than an estimate of the total number of houses in the Council's area and of the period the Council think they will need to secure the demolition of all these houses, together with the Council's programme of action in relation to these houses during the next five years.

In October, 1953, although the Government's proposals were not then known, it was decided to carry out a Rapid Housing Survey in Chesham, with a view to obtaining a broad picture of the housing situation.

The Survey was completed between October 1953 and May 1954, a total number of 2,914 private dwellings being recorded.

It was decided to sort the houses into four categories, based on a rapid assessment of their condition and useful life. The four categories were:-

- Category I Houses of a high standard with modern amenities and in a good state of repair (1,099 dwellings - 38.14%)
- Category II Houses worthy of consideration for improvement, i.e. houses of sound construction and in good repair, but possessing poor amenities (1,001 dwellings - 34.74%)
- Category III Substandard houses considered worthy of adequate maintenance to prolong their useful life, but not suitable for large scale improvement (607 dwellings - 21.06%)
- Category IV Houses of the lowest standard which could not be rendered fit for human habitation without drastic reconstruction and improvement. This category included all houses which would normally be considered suitable only for inclusion in clearance areas or for individual demolition action. (174 dwellings - 6.06%)

The following table gives the result of the Survey in classified form.

		C A T E G O R Y							
		I		II		III		IV	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Private Dwellings	2881	1099	38.14	1001	34.74	607	21.06	174	6.06
Council Dwellings	948	429	45.25	519	54.75	-		-	
Caravans	33	-		-		-		33	100
TOTALS	3862	1528	39.56	1520	39.35	607	15.71	207	5.38

The Public Health Committee of the Council have set up a special Committee to give detailed consideration to future slum clearance problems.

3. IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

The Chesham Council has implemented the provisions of the Housing Act, 1949, which enable Local Authorities to make financial grants to private persons in respect of the improvement or conversion of house property.

Although the Act enabling grants to be made had been in force several years no applications had been received in years prior to 1954. Further encouragement was given to owners to apply for grants when the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, amended the Housing Act, 1949, and some of the more stringent requirements were relaxed. Among other things the new Act reduced from 30 to 15 years the period for which a dwelling must after improvement or conversion be expected to provide satisfactory accommodation in order to qualify for a grant.

The table below gives the number of applications considered, together with the amount of the grants approved:-

Number of applications for improvement grants received	13
" " " " " " approved	12
Total estimated cost of improvement works	£4,777.5.0d.
" amount of grants approved	£2,089.16.0d.

Individual grants have ranged in value from £65.10.0d. to £275. The Council has decided as a general rule not to make grants in excess of £275. In the main, the improvements to houses have consisted of the provision of bathrooms and inside water closets; the installation of hot water systems and modern fireplaces; and the modernising of facilities for the preparation, cooking and storage of food.

The technical and administrative work involved in the consideration of applications for improvement grants has been carried out by officers of the Public Health Department.

4. INSPECTIONS AND SUMMARY OF ACTION TAKEN

I. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year:-

1. (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	82
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	332
2. (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Acts	4
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	30
3. Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	4
4. Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation.	78

II. Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal Notices:-

1. Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	49
--	----

III. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:-

A. Proceedings under Sections 9,10, and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:-

1. Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring repairs	0
2. Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices	
(a) by owners	0
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	0

B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:-

1. Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which formal notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	0
2. Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices	
(a) by owners	0
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	2

C. Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:-

1. Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	0
--	---

III. C. Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:-

2. Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made (Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1953) 0
3. Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders 2
4. Number of individual unfit houses in respect of which the Local Authority accepted undertakings either that the premises would be rendered fit for human habitation within a specified period, or that they would not be used for human habitation until rendered fit for that purpose. 1

D. Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:-

1. Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made 0
2. Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit 0

Housing Act, 1936. Overcrowding

- (a) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year 15
- (b) Number of persons concerned in cases under (a) 57
- (c) Number of cases of overcrowding in Council houses relieved during the year (included under (a)) 6

5. POST WAR HOUSING

During 1954 the Council rehoused 241 families, including 59 exchanges of tenancy.

Since 1946, Chesham Council have provided alternative housing accommodation for 931 families and the following details of the number of new dwellings erected in the post-war periods are of interest.

POST WAR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

YEAR	HOUSE TYPES & NUMBERS				ANNUAL COUNCIL TOTAL	HOUSES ERECTED BY PRIVATE ENTERPRISE
	Temporary Bungalows	Houses	Flats	Old Peoples Bungalows		
1946	35				35	14
1947		14			14	17
1948		67			67	15
1949		87	28		115	24
1950		18	8		26	15
1951		33	8	8	49	11
1952			36		36	5
1953		22	12	5	39	31
1954		144	17		161	69 +
TOTAL	35	385	109	13	542	201

+ Includes 8 houses erected by a Housing Association.

SECTION G

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. WATER SUPPLY

Main water in the Chesham Urban District is supplied by the Council's Undertaking and the Undertaking of the Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Company and amalgamated companies. The Council's Undertaking supplies 84% of the total dwellings within the district in that part which may be conveniently described as the area of the Urban District prior to the extension of boundaries in 1934.

During the year under review the Undertakings have supplied main water that has been satisfactory both in regard to quantity and quality.

There remain within the Urban District only 37 dwellings (including three caravans) dependent upon a well supply of water. The quality of the well water is known to be generally satisfactory, although in a few instances there has been evidence of intermittent contamination. In these cases householders have been advised to boil all water before use for domestic purposes. Advice concerning overhaul of pumps or cleansing of polluted wells has also been given.

Treatment and Plumbo-Solvency of Water

The main supplies receive no treatment other than chlorination and the waters are not liable to have plumbo-solvent action.

Distribution

During the year the following new water mains were laid by Chesham Council's Water Undertaking:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Diameter</u>
Fullers Hill Housing Estate	528 yards	3"
Kirtle Road - Victoria Road	98 "	3"
Vale Rise Estate (Lynn Estate)	684 "	4"
Beechcroft Road and Hampden Avenue - Link	82 "	4"
- ditto -	112 "	3"

Sampling of Public Water Supplies

Samples of water as distributed from piped supplies have been taken throughout the year and submitted to the Public Analyst for chemical and bacteriological examination. The following table shows the number of samples taken with the results of examinations:-

<u>Name of water Undertaking</u>	<u>Samples for Bacteriological Examination</u>		<u>Samples for Chemical Analysis</u>	
	<u>Date</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Result</u>
Urban District Council of Chesham	20.5.54	Satisfactory	20.5.54.	Satisfactory
	22.6.54	"	22.6.54.	"
	23.9.54	"	23.9.54.	"
	24.11.54	"	24.11.54	"
Berkhamsted Supply	20.5.54	Satisfactory	20.5.54.	Satisfactory
	28.7.54	"	28.7.54.	"
Rickmansworth & Uxbridge Supply	28.7.54	Satisfactory	28.7.54.	Satisfactory
	24.11.54	"	24.11.54	"
Amersham and Beaconsfield Supply	22.6.54.	Satisfactory	22.6.54.	Satisfactory
	23.9.54.	"	23.9.54.	"

Chemical Analysis and Bacteriological Examination

The following are copies of the Analyst's reports on the examination of four recent samples:-

No. W/15/54	Lye Green Cottages, Chesham.	(Berkhampstead Supply)
No. W/16/54	76 Bois Moor Road, Chesham.	(Amersham & Beaconsfield)
No. W/18/54	Council Offices, Chesham.	(Chesham U.D. Council)
No. W/19/54	Vale Cottages, Chesham.	(Rickmansworth & Uxbridge)

Chemical Analysis

	W/15/54	W/16/54	W/18/54	W/19/54
Appearance	All samples clear & colourless			
Reaction (pH)	7.1	7.1	7.2	7.2
	Parts per million			
Free Chlorine	nil	nil	nil	nil
Total Solids	310	337	312	354
Chlorine in Chlorides	17.5	14.8	12.0	15.0
Ammoniacal Nitrogen	nil	0.006	nil	0.004
Albuminoid Nitrogen	0.003	nil	0.010	0.014
Nitrate Nitrogen	5.0	1.5	3.2	3.0
Nitrite Nitrogen	nil	nil	nil	nil
Oxygen absorbed from permanganate (3 hrs. @ 98°F.)	nil	nil	0.19	0.17
Hardness, Temporary	228	250	242	260
Permanent	24	40	38	48
Total	252	290	280	308
Metals -				
Lead, copper, zinc	Not found in any samples			

Bacteriological Examination

Colonies on agar in 48 hrs. @ 37°C. per ml.	1	0	6	2
Colonies on agar in 72 hrs. @ 20°C. per ml.	nil	1	1	9
Coliform bacilli	Not found in 100 ml.			

Opinion - All Samples

From these results I am of opinion that the water is of high chemical and bacteriological purity and suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

Number of dwellings and estimated population supplied from public water mains (31.3.54.)

	Internal piped supply		External (standpipes, etc.)		
	No. of Houses	Est. Pop.	No. of Houses	No. of Caravans	Est. Pop.
Chesham Urban District Council Supply	3139	9511	89	23	175
Other Water Undertakings	533	1629	34	7	123
TOTALS	3672	11140	123	30	298

Number of dwellings supplied from wells - 37 (including 3 caravans)

2. PUBLIC SWIMMING BATHS

The results of bacteriological examinations carried out on samples of water taken from the Council's Swimming Bath during the year are given below:-

<u>Source (Pump)</u>		<u>Filled Bath</u>	
3rd June	Satisfactory	3rd June	Satisfactory
8th June	Unsatisfactory	8th June	"
		13th July	"

The satisfactory results on the water from the filled bath are an indication that the dosage of chlorine had been maintained at an effective level.

The Council are at present considering various proposals for improving public swimming bath facilities in the district.

3. SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

A recent survey of drainage arrangements showed that approximately 89% of the dwellings in the District were connected to the Council's sewer. The remaining 11% or approximately 450 dwellings are situated in areas at present not served by a public sewer. Most of these dwellings drain to either a sealed cesspool or to a septic tank and soakaway into the chalk stratum. Until recently the latter system has been the most commonly used but the Chesham Council decided in 1954 that sealed cesspools must in future be provided in all cases where the soil sewer is not available.

The Council's machine emptied 151 cesspools during 1954, 138 of them being in the Urban District, whilst the remainder were in adjoining areas. The charges for emptying cesspools were reviewed by the Council in November and fixed at 15/- for each emptying of a cesspool which is in the Urban District and 17/6d per hour for emptying cesspools outside the Urban District.

The sewerage is on the separate system, the soil water sewer discharging at the Council's Sewage Disposal Plant in Latimer Road.

4. REFUSE DISPOSAL

All house refuse collected in the Urban District is disposed of by incineration at the Council's Incinerator Plant in Latimer Road., Chesham.

Salvage Return for year 1954

	tons cwt. lbs.			£.	s.	d.
Scrap Iron	8	19	-	40.	16.	6.
Scrap Lead		3	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	12.	14.	2.
Scrap Brass, Copper etc.		7	62	10.	5.	6.
Bottles & Jars	3	15	-	8.	17.	7.
Loose tins	16	12	28	29.	1.	6.
	29	17	62	£101.	15.	3.

SECTION H

SANITARY INSPECTION

1. Sanitary Inspectors' Visits

Number of Houses inspected under Public Health Acts ..	78
Revisits to houses under Public Health Acts	220
Number of houses inspected and recorded under	
Housing Acts	4
Revisits to houses under Housing Acts	30
Houses recorded in Rapid Housing Survey	2415
Number of houses inspected for vermin	1
Number of rooms disinfested	2
Number of revisits to verminous houses	4
Visits to houses in connection with Improvement Grants,	
Housing Act, 1949	117
Miscellaneous visits to houses	325
Visits where Infectious Disease had occurred	7
Number of rooms disinfested	4
Infestations of wasps destroyed	35
Visits to Slaughterhouse (Meat Inspection).....	778
Visits to Butchers' Shops	20
Visits to Fish Shops	10
Visits to Grocers' Shops	92
Visits to Ice-Cream Premises	36
Visits to Food Preparing Places	20
Visits to Restaurants	23
Visits to Bakehouses	6
Visits to Dairies	3
Visits in connection with Milk Sampling	4
Visits to Licensed Premises	4
Visits to Knacker's Yard	1
Visits and inspections of Factories	43
Visits to Outworkers' premises	61
Visits in connection with Water Supply	54
Visits in connection with Rodent Control	88
Interviews	261
Miscellaneous Visits	363

2. LIBRARY BOOKS

During the year, six library books were withdrawn from houses where infectious disease had occurred and were disinfested before being returned to the librarian for re-circulation.

3. VERMINOUS PREMISES

During the year one infestation of fleas was reported and treated.

In addition, in response to requests for help from occupiers, nests of wasps were destroyed at ~~thirty~~ five premises during the summer months.

4. PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936, STATUTORY NOTICES

No Statutory Notices under the Public Health Act, 1936 were served during the year. A Notice under Section 45 of the Act, which had been served upon an owner in 1953 requiring him to repair the roof of a water closet common to two houses, was outstanding at the beginning of 1954. The notice was not complied with and the Council authorised the necessary work to be carried out in default, the expenses incurred being subsequently recovered from the owner.

5. PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936, ABATEMENT OF NUISANCES

The following table shows the number of defects which have been dealt with by means of informal action during 1954:-

Abatement of Nuisances

Defect	Number of Defects			
	Outstanding on 1.1.54	Reported in 1954	Remedied in 1954	Outstanding on 31.12.54
Dampness	32	30	50	12
Defective doors and windows	7	15	14	8
Defective roof surface water drainage	14	14	22	6
Defective sanitary accommodation	13	14	27	-
Defective floors, stairs, etc.	9	7	13	3
Defective dustbins	5	13	16	2
Defective plasterwork	4	3	5	2
Defective fireplaces	3	2	3	2
Leaking roofs	9	18	17	10
Defective and dangerous ceilings	4	-	4	-
Unsatisfactory yard paving and drainage	6	2	-	8
Defective drainage systems	4	5	8	1
Choked drains	-	5	5	-
Miscellaneous	-	7	2	5
TOTALS	110	135	186	59

6. PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936. Provision of Dustbins

In accordance with the provisions of Section 75 (3) of the Act and following the procedure described in the Report for 1950, dustbins were provided by the Council at twelve houses within the District during the year.

7. RODENT CONTROL

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949

Following the success of a new method of rodent treatment in 1952/3, the majority of infestations occurring in 1954 were treated by this method. It is based on the use of a rodenticide incorporating an anti-blood coagulant (dicoumarin, warfarin and derivatives). This substance does not induce bait shyness and no pre-baiting is needed. Amongst other advantages is the fact that the substance is painless in operation.

During the year the sewers received two maintenance treatments for rat infestations. The first was carried out in June when 20 manholes were dealt with and five complete takes observed. 21 manholes were baited during the second treatment in December, when fourteen complete takes were observed.

In addition, a 10% test of the remainder of the sewer manholes was undertaken, resulting in four fresh infestations being detected and treated.

Frequent treatments have also been carried out on the site of the Council's Incinerator and Sewage works, and at no time did the infestations get out of hand on this potentially dangerous spot.

Annual Report by Local Authorities to Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food

A complete record of the work of rodent control in the District is contained in the annual return which has to be submitted to the Infestation Control Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. The latest report, a copy of which is given below, covers the claim year, 1st April 1954 to 31st March 1955.

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949

Report for 12 months period ended 31st March 1955

	T Y P E O F P R O P E R T Y				
	Non-Agricultural				Agricultural
	Local Authority (1)	Dwelling Houses inc. Council Houses (2)	All other (including Business Premises) (3)	Total (4)	
I. Number of properties in Local Authority's District	11	3826	541	4378	45
II. Number of properties inspected as a result of:					
(a) Notification	1	117	21	139	-
(b) Survey under Act	4	1423	35	1462	7
(c) Otherwise	-	82	68	150	-
III. Total inspections carried out - including re-inspections		Figures not readily available			
IV. Number of properties inspected (in Sect. II) which were found to be infested by:					
(a) Rats - Major	-	-	-	-	-
Minor	4	132	28	164	-
(b) Mice - Major	-	-	-	-	-
Minor	-	9	5	14	-
V. Number of infested properties treated by L.A.	4	131	23	158	-
VI. Total treatments carried out - including re-treatments	8	155	33	196	-
VII. Number of notices served under Sect. 4 of the Act					
(a) Treatment	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Structural Work	-	-	-	-	-
VIII. Number of 'Block' control schemes carried out	-	20	-	20	-

8. RAG FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT, 1951

Two premises are registered under the Act, the activities carried on being the manufacture of soft toys in one case and the upholstery of furniture and bedding in the other.

9. PET ANIMALS ACT, 1951

During the year one person has been licensed to keep a pet shop in the District. The Sanitary Inspectors have made periodical visits to the premises and have found that the conditions under which the animals are kept for sale are satisfactory.

10. PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936, Section 269 - Moveable Dwellings

During 1954, 29 persons were licensed under Section 269 of the Act to station moveable dwellings in the District. Twenty-three of the caravans were stationed on the site managed by the Chesham Urban District Council on their land at Trapps Lane, Chesham, the remaining six being located on various individual sites throughout the district.

The Council's site which has been fully occupied since opening in 1951 contains standings for 23 caravans. A piped supply of main water is available and a communal sanitary block has been provided, containing water closets and washing facilities. A rental of 7/6d per week is charged for each caravan.

SECTION I

MILK

1. Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949 to 1954.
 Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949 to 1954.
 Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk)
 Regulations, 1949 to 1953.
-

Since the coming into operation of the above-mentioned Regulations, on the 1st October 1949, the duties of Local Authorities have been concerned mainly with the enforcement of provisions relating to the distribution of milk and to its handling and treatment at premises other than dairy farms. The provisions with regard to infection of milk with diseases communicable to man are also the responsibility of Local Authorities.

There are eleven producers of milk within the Council's area and the majority are known to have licensed "Tuberculin Tested" herds. All but one dispose of their milk in bulk, either to the local firm of Chesham Dairies, Limited, or to the Express Dairy Company (London) Limited.

The one producer/retailer operates a retail round in the Chesham area, selling "Tuberculin Tested" milk.

Number of Registered Milk Distributors	4
" " " Premises used as Dairies (not being dairy farms)	1

The number and type of licenses granted by this Authority under the Regulations are given below:-

Dealer's Licence authorising the use of the special designation "Tuberculin Tested"	2
Supplementary Licence authorising the use of the special designation "Pasteurised"	2
Supplementary Licence authorising the use of the special designation "Tuberculin Tested"	2
Supplementary Licence authorising the use of the special designation "Sterilised"	1

During the year six samples of bottled milk in respect of which the special designation "Pasteurised" was in use were collected from licensed distributors in the area and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for examination. All samples passed the prescribed tests for "Pasteurised" Milk.

2. Food and Drugs Acts.
 Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949 - Article 20
Brucella Infection
-

During the year one sample of milk taken from a producer in this area by the Chief Inspector of the County Council was found on biological examination to be Brucella infected.

No action under the above Regulations was necessary as all milk from the infected supply was pasteurised before sale.

3. Tuberculosis Order, 1938

No notifications of the slaughter of tuberculous animals under the above Order were received during the year.

SECTION J

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

1. NUMBER OF FOOD PREMISES BY TYPES

General Grocery and Green Grocery Shops	53
Butchers' Shops	13
Wet Fish Shops	3
Fish Frying Premises	4
Bakers	3
Confectionery	12
Restaurants	11
Food manufacturing premises	2
Dairies	1
Factory & Shop Canteens	5
School Kitchens	1
Licensed Premises (public houses, hotels)	26
Food Warehouses	1
Slaughterhouses	1
	<u>136</u>

Note: Premises at which more than one type of business is carried on are counted once only.

2. REGISTRATION OF PREMISES USED FOR THE MANUFACTURE, STORAGE OR SALE OF FOOD UNDER SECTION 14 OF THE FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1938

	Premises on Register 1953	Added to Register 1954	Removed from Register 1954	Total on Register 31.12.54
Sale and Storage of ice-cream	39	3	-	42
Manufacture of ice-cream	6	-	-	6
Manufacture of Preserved Food	15	2	-	17
Fish Frying	5	-	-	5
TOTALS	65	5	-	70

Note: Of the six premises registered for manufacture of ice-cream, only two are now actually doing so.

3. FOOD HYGIENE

During the year, the Sanitary Inspectors made 214 visits to food premises.

Further progress was made in securing the hygienic handling, storage and display of food, having regard to the provisions of the "Clean Food" Byelaws operative in the District.

Where new food shops are opened or there is a change of occupier, every effort is made to visit the premises and interview the proprietor during the first week or so of business. Advice given at this early stage is more likely to be heeded than that given when working arrangements have become well-established.

A copy of the "Clean Food" Byelaws is supplied to each new trader, together with Notices for display, requesting customers not to bring dogs into premises in which food is sold.

4. SLAUGHTERHOUSES

Since 1939 shortage of food has led successive Governments to buy or to control the purchase of many of the principal foodstuffs, whether produced at home or imported from abroad. In addition, marketing distribution and selling prices have been kept under control. On the 15th January, 1940, the Meat and Livestock Control Scheme came into operation. The restrictions imposed by this Control Scheme came to an end on the 2nd July, 1954, and the 1954 Slaughterhouses Act became law on Monday, 5th July.

In November 1953, the Government declared its long-term policy in regard to two related matters. It re-affirmed its long-term policy of moderate concentration of Slaughterhouses. In this connection it should be stated that as an emergency measure, for the purpose of the Control Scheme, the Government had already built five slaughterhouses which are in operation at Canterbury, Fareham, Grimsby, Guildford and Swindon and two more were nearing completion at Salisbury and Wimborne. The Government also announced its intention to fulfil important obligations to farmers under the Agriculture Act, 1947, and these do not exclude the possibility of a producers' MARKETING BOARD for meat, as a long-term policy.

During the 14 year period of control, the Government restricted slaughtering facilities to the authorised abattoirs of the Control Scheme. These abattoirs also served as centres for meat distribution areas. The locally authorised abattoir was situated at Chesham and it served also as a centre for the meat distribution area comprising the districts of the Chesham Urban and the Amersham Rural District Councils. One of the many consequences of this centralisation of abattoirs was the fact that private slaughterhouses fell into disrepair, the premises were put to other uses or had become obsolete. At any rate, for one reason or another, it was uncertain how many of those pre-war slaughterhouses were suitable and would be available, or indeed whether the present occupiers proposed to use them for their original purpose, on decontrol. Consequently it was left to the Local Authorities to ensure that on the date of decontrol the slaughtering facilities in their areas would be adequate. This was secured satisfactorily locally by Amersham Rural District Council and Chesham Urban District Council jointly coming to an agreement with a group of Amersham and Chesham traders whereby the facilities hitherto available at Chesham Central Abattoir would continue to be placed at the disposal of the local traders.

The following table gives an interesting comparison between the average annual number of animals examined at private slaughterhouses in Chesham during five pre-war years (1933 - 1938) and the average annual number of animals killed in Chesham Central Abattoir in the nine post-war years (1946-1953)

Annual Average of Animals Examined at Private Slaughterhouses in five pre-war years (1933-1938)		Annual Average of Animals killed at Chesham Abattoir in nine post-war years (1945 - 1953)	
Beasts	250	Beasts	1,487
Calves	175	Calves	925
Sheep	713	Sheep	3,300
Pigs	90	Pigs	218

5. MEAT INSPECTION

(a) Meat Inspection at Slaughterhouse

The Council's Sanitary Inspectors are responsible for the examinations of all meat and a system of 100% inspection is in operation. This work has involved 778 visits to the slaughterhouse during the past twelve months.

The group of private butchers operating the Slaughterhouse since July have granted satisfactory facilities for inspecting all carcasses and offal. Inspection duties have, however, tended to be spread over longer hours due to the irregular times of slaughtering.

A table showing the numbers of carcasses inspected and condemned in 1954 is given below. A feature of the slaughtering this year has been the large number of pigs killed.

Carcasses inspected and condemned

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	1,100	85	213	3,631	2,122
Number inspected	1,100	85	213	3,631	2,122
<u>All diseases except T.B.</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned	-	3	2	-	5
Carcasses of which some part or organ condemned	361	19	1	149	187
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than T.B.	32.8%	25.9%	1.4%	4.1%	9.0%
<u>Tuberculosis only:</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned	8	-	-	-	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ condemned	86	17	-	-	62
Percentage of number inspected affected with T.B.	8.5%	20.0%	-	-	2.9%

(b) Cysticercus bovis

The routine post-mortem examination of cattle included a search for cysticercus bovis infestation, as recommended by the Ministry of Food in 1948. The detection of this condition is important in relation to meat inspection as the consumption of flesh containing viable cysts can give rise to tapeworm infection in man. In 1954, 14 cases were discovered representing an incidence of 1.2 per cent in animals examined. The examination revealed only slight infestations and in no case was it necessary for the carcasses infected to be totally condemned. As a measure of safety, however, all carcasses and offal from affected animals, before being released for human consumption, were subjected to a period of cold storage to render the cysts harmless.

In an effort to trace the sources of infection, particulars of affected animals were sent to the Public Health Departments of the Authorities in whose areas the animals were last known to have been located, with a view to enquiries being made on the farms concerned.

(c) Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933

Number of Slaughtermen on Register at 31st December 1953	13
Applications for Licences considered during 1954	-
Number of Slaughtermen removed from Register (no applications for renewal of Licences)	1
Number of Slaughtermen on Register at 31st December 1954	12

6. KNACKERS' YARDS

In October 1954, "Ministry of Food Model Byelaws Series II" were received, dealing with the sanitary conditions, management and keeping of records in Knackers' Yards.

After consideration, the Council decided to adopt these Byelaws relating to Knackers' Yards in the form of the model prepared by the Ministry of Food.

In order to give reasonable time to the owner of the only Knacker's Yard in the District to carry out such work and to make such arrangements as will enable him to comply with the Byelaws, the Byelaws will not be put in force before 24th November, 1956.

7. ICE-CREAM

During the year frequent visits have been made to premises where ice-cream is manufactured or sold with a view to ensuring that the provisions of the Ice-Cream (Heat Treatment, etc.) Regulations, 1947 to 1952, are observed.

Ice-cream Sampling

Twenty-two samples of ice-cream were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for bacteriological examination, and the following table shows a summary of the results obtained:-

	Samples Taken	Provisional Grading recommended by Ministry of Health			
		I	II	III	IV
Ice-cream manufactured in district	5	4	1	-	-
Ice-cream manufactured outside district	7	4	1	1	1
TOTALS	12	8	2	1	1

8. FOOD POISONING NOTIFICATIONS

No cases of food poisoning were notified during the year.

9. CONDEMNED FOODSTUFFS

	Tons	Cwts.	lbs.
Beef	6	9	25
Mutton		2	75
Pork		18	6
Veal			91
Ham			15
Fish			28
Cheese			26
Sausages			52
Corned Beef			25
	7	12	7

Tinned Goods

Milk	264	tins
Fish	73	"
Meat	155	"
Fruit	433	"
Vegetables	169	"
Cheese	1	"

Disposal of Condemned Foodstuffs

Condemned foodstuff (other than meat) is collected from traders by the Surveyor's Department of the Council and destroyed by incineration at the Council's plant in Latimer Road, Chesham.

Until the decontrol of slaughtering in July, 1954, all meat and offal found to be unfit for human consumption at the Slaughterhouse was disposed of under arrangements made by the Ministry of Food. The Manager of the Slaughterhouse kept this Department informed of the buyers of the condemned material and where their addresses were outside the District information was passed on to the appropriate Authority.

Upon decontrol, the disposal of meat found to be unfit was subject to arrangements between the Council and individual owners. Without prejudice to powers of seizure under the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, the Council agreed to permit owners to retain possession of unsound meat, provided they gave a signed undertaking that such meat would not be used for human consumption.

Before disposal the owners are requested to notify the Chief Sanitary Inspector of the names and addresses of the persons to whom the condemned materials are being consigned. As a safeguard, the Chesham Slaughterhouse Company, who operate the Slaughterhouse, undertake to stain the rejected meat and offal with a green dye before allowing removal from the premises.

Part I of the Act

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health.

PREMISES	Number on Register	Inspections	Number of Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Section 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	9	2	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authorities	95	36	-	-
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworker's premises)	5	5	-	-
TOTAL	109	43	-	-

2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

PARTICULARS	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	Referred By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding (S.2)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	7	4	-	2	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	7	4	-	2	-

3. OUTWORK

During the year lists of outworkers have been received showing the names of fifty one persons engaged in the following classes of work.

Textile weaving	29
Making of wearing apparel	1
Brush-making	9
Making of Christmas Crackers	12

There were three cases of default in sending lists of outworkers to the Council as required by Section 110 of the Factories Act, 1937. The firms giving the outwork were notified and requested to supply the necessary lists in February and August of each year.

4. CHESHAM INDUSTRIES

The following is a list of Factories, and Factories (No Mechanical Power) on the Register on the 31st December, 1954.

Factories with Power

Woodware and Joinery	14
Motor-vehicle repairs	10
Brushware	10
Boot Manufacture and Repairs	6
Light Engineering	11
Clothing and Textiles	4
Printers	3
Toy Manufacture	2
Plastic Moulding	2
Food Manufacture and Packing	8
Upholstery	2
Miscellaneous	21
Manufacturing Jewellers	2
	<hr/>
	95
	<hr/>
Building operations	5

Factories (No Mechanical Power)

Upholstery	1
Undertakers	1
Stone Mason	1
Blacksmith	1
Dressmaking	1
Cycle Repairs	1
Waste Merchant	1
Radio Engineer	1
Packing	1
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